

Careers

news

Autumn 2016



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an extra degree
of difficulty***

***Carer
Story***

***Significant
Mental Health
Reforms***

Experiences and needs of older LGBTI
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Message from Caroline

Welcome to 2016 and Carers News Autumn edition.

We warmly welcome Callum Ingram, who has commenced with us as a new board member. Callum has held executive and leadership positions within the public sector, commercial and not-for-profit organisations, and brings extensive experience in corporate services, strategy and policy development. Callum is currently part of the executive management team at Museum Victoria. Carers Victoria's vision is that all carers and caring families are valued and supported – regardless of age, background, culture, sexuality, intersex status and/or gender identity.

As part of the Young LGBTIQ Carers program for workers we were privileged to hear the stories of young LGBTIQ carers and on page 12 you can read Matt's story. In November 2015, on behalf of Carers Australia and in conjunction with Val's Café, I launched a new evidence based guide entitled 'An Extra Degree of Difficulty', which explores the experiences and needs of older LGBTI carers and of older LGBTI people (see page 6).

Carers Victoria recently delivered its Pre-Budget Submission to the Victorian Government. In 'Take Action for Victorian Carers', the submission asks the Victorian Government to address the challenges carers face now and into the future through the following priorities:

Priority 1: Development of a whole-of-government state-wide Victorian Carer Strategy

Priority 2: Ongoing investment in carer identification, tailored information and advocacy



Priority 3: Continued support of carer specific services and programs

You can read our Pre-Budget Submission on our website. We invite all feedback either via our website or email: policy@carersvictoria.org

In February 2016 we commenced our Carers Victoria Information Roadshow. Over the coming months, we are visiting Traralgon, Shepparton, Ballarat, Horsham and Benalla. At these sessions we will provide information for Carers, specifically on the upcoming NDIS roll out, along with information around Aged Care and Consumer Directed Care.

For more information see the enclosed flyer or call 1800 242 636 or to register your attendance email: events@carersvictoria.org.au

We look forward to providing services and supporting you in your caring role in 2016.

Caroline Mulcahy
CEO, Carers Victoria

What's happening at *Carers Victoria*

Book An Education And Training Session For Your Carer Support Group

Why not get in early and book a training session for your carer support group's 2016 calendar? Our educators can provide your group with information and guidance on a wide range of topics. The best part is that we come to you, no matter where you are in Victoria. We also provide specific training for facilitators of support groups, giving you tips on how to successfully establish and manage your group.

If you would like to find out more or book a session with one of our experienced educators, call our Advisory Line on **1800 242 636** or email: education@carersvictoria.org.au



Above // Carers Victoria staff, members and friends at Mardi Gras Fair Day 2016.

Mardi Gras Fair Day – 21 February 2016

Carers Victoria joined other Carer Associations to participate in the annual LGBTIQ Mardi Gras 2016 Fair Day with a stall and rainbow carer cards.



Above // Carers Victoria staff at Midsumma Festival 2016.

NEW Service: The Caring Differently – Better Questions Workshop

This five-hour workshop offers highly effective communication strategies and practical tips to enable carers to enhance their communication skills. This has the potential to lead to better outcomes for the person who is receiving care, as well as improved communication, relationships and confidence in other areas of the carer's life.

This workshop is designed specifically for people who are caring for someone with a mental illness. It will empower them to ask 'Better Questions' and support the person they are caring for to become more self-sufficient, enabling them to better manage their own health, wellbeing and lifestyle choices.

Carers Victoria At Midsumma Festival 2016

Carers Victoria participated in Midsumma Festival again this year (17 January - 7 February 2016). A celebration of Melbourne's LGBTIQ community, Midsumma had a terrific program of events, exhibitions, forums and other activities. Staff ran a stall at Carnival Day in the Alexandra Gardens and joined Carers Victoria members, management, family and friends in the annual Pride March.

We also attended local events as part of Midsumma's Go West, including the 'Outing Disability' photographic exhibition at Footscray Library, aimed at increasing awareness of LGBTIQ people with disability.



Andrew's Story

"I remember once, Robert* was rushed to the hospital and we were running after his hospital bed through the corridors. It was hectic and frightening. A nurse stepped in front of me and I put my hand up and said "Mother" and in that instance she let me go by. I still think about that horrible day for many reasons. Thankfully Robert is still with us but I often think 'what I would say now?' If I had to explain everything... would I lose the bed and not be there if something happened because I had to explain in detail my story about who I am?"

Not many carers use the term 'carer' to describe themselves. They use other signifiers; son, daughter, spouse, partner, mother, father. These words give an identity in emergency situations – with this one word doctors will often assess quickly if you should be part of 'the conversation'.

This is a very real fear for Andrew who transitioned** when his son was in his late teens. Andrew knows that in the eyes of many his 'signifier' has become complicated – he went from being his son's mother with the traditional physical attributes of a mother, to his son's mother, who is a man.

For years Andrew had been his son's primary carer. He would sleep by Robert's bed in fear of not hearing his breath; he would bathe him; dress him; feed him. As these years went on, Andrew started to become depressed. He was losing himself to being a carer, a symptom many carers often feel.

However, for Andrew it was only worsened as he was losing himself in a body that never felt like his.

"Every part of me didn't feel like me. I remember one day, my blackest day, I went out the front of the house and collapsed on the front lawn. I didn't think I could do it anymore. It was then I decided I needed to change to feel like me, because otherwise I would not survive being my son's carer and what would he do if that happened?"

It took Andrew over two years to transition into the man he has always been on his inside. Within these two years, Andrew has thrived – he has truly accepted himself, he has entered a new relationship, he is a pillar of support within the trans community and most importantly he is happy.

Alongside this, Robert has also been able to achieve many things Andrew once thought impossible. He is healthier and more independent.

"Now that I am happy and comfortable and can see a future for myself, I think I am pushing Robert to have one of his own as well," Andrew says. "He will always need care, and will always need me, but we are now two individuals."

Support, services and information is available via the Gender Centre: www.gendercentre.org.au

* Name changed to protect privacy.

** Transitioning is the process of changing one's gender presentation permanently to accord with one's internal sense of one's gender - the idea of what it means to be a man or a woman. For transgender and transsexual people, this process commonly involves sex reassignment therapy (which may include hormone replacement therapy and sex reassignment surgery), with their gender identity being opposite that of their birth-assigned sex and gender.

10 ways...

Of Taking A Break Without Leaving The House

When our days are filled with endless tasks and responsibilities, having some 'me time' is often challenging. You don't have to leave the comfort of your home to relax! Try the following to help you approach the next thing on your 'to do' list with a clearer mind.

1 Have some honey

You have heard the saying a "spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down", try a spoonful of honey the next time you need a little time out. Honey provides compounds which reduce inflammation in the brain, assisting in fighting depression and anxiety.

2 Sip green tea

Rather than reaching boiling point, make yourself a nice cup of green tea. Experts say green tea has L-Theanine, a chemical to help relieve anger.

3 Rest your weary head

It's not always possible to take a power nap throughout the day. So instead, find your favourite pillow and rest your head while trying this visualisation technique: imagine the pillow is a sponge sucking up all your worries and concerns.

4 Try progressive relaxation

When you are feeling overwhelmed, tense your muscles and then release and repeat. Start with your shoulders and then work your way down. This method is also helpful to assist in falling asleep.

5 Keep calm with cold water

The next time stress is heading your way make a beeline to the bathroom and dab some cold water on your wrists and behind your earlobes. There are major arteries right underneath the skin, so cooling these areas can help calm the whole body.

6 DIY hand massage

Apply some hand or body lotion and start kneading the base of the muscle under the thumb to relieve stress in the shoulders, neck and scalp.

7 Don't forget your feet

Get an impromptu relaxing foot massage by rolling the soles of your feet back and forth over golf balls.

8 Squeeze stress away

Carry a stress ball and the next time you feel anxiety creeping up on you squeeze that stress away. A squeeze of a stress ball is great for relieving built-up tension.

9 Look outside

When things are particularly hectic, remember to take five minutes to look out the window. Looking at nature and greenery like trees, grass and parks can be a lot more relaxing than watching television.

10 Write it down

Start a daily journal. Writing your feelings down can help relieve anxiety. Once you have written them down, close the book and leave your worries there.



LGBTI Val's Café

...an extra degree of difficulty

Val's Café was established in 2009 and seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of older lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people. Central to this aim is creating safe and inclusive services that recognise and value older LGBTI clients.



Carers Australia and the State and Territory associations are proud to work alongside Val's Café in undertaking research about and developing resources for older LGBTI carers.

We know that older LGBTI people are more likely to be carers and rely on intimate partners and friend carers. This has been attributed to the facts that older LGBTI people have limited contact with biological family and they are less likely to have children. It has also been attributed to their historical experience of discrimination – which may have further contributed to delays accessing formal services due to fear of discrimination.

In November 2015, Carers Victoria CEO Caroline Mulcahy, on behalf of Carers Australia, officially launched a new evidence based guide, entitled 'An Extra Degree of Difficulty', which explores the experiences and needs of older LGBTI carers and of older LGBTI people.

The resource includes practical strategies around supporting LGBTI carers who:

- are caring for biological family members who are homophobic
- are caring for partners who are fearful of discrimination in accessing formal care

- need social support, peer support and respite, or
- need recognition of their experience of loss and grief.

Stories from the research:

Sharon's Story

My mother lives on her own in a retirement village. I do all her shopping, take her to appointments, fix her iPad ... Her mind is very good, but her body's faltering a bit. I have a son with an intellectual disability and an autism spectrum disorder. I organise all his care and his therapies and his day program...

"I have to be different people at different times all the time. I have to remember not to talk about my lesbian partner in front of my daughter and my mother. So I'm very guarded in what I'm saying all the time. It's tiring."

Mark's Story

I came out, what, 15 years ago and I went from being perhaps the most favoured son to the black sheep in one nanosecond.

"I think coming out has made it difficult for my mother because I am not fulfilling the Catholic dream of a married life... I think that has been the most serious break really between us," Mark said.

Mark states that while the degree of caring is manageable it is harder than he first realised.

"It's probably more emotionally challenging in the sense that there's this constant sense of disapproval that I get ... whatever I do or however much I assist it's not going to make up for my basic state of my basic sinful state."

More Information

Reprinted and adapted with permission by Val's Café. Extract from 'An Extra Degree of Difficulty'.

www.valscafe.org.au/index.php/resources

Robyne's Story

I am fifty five years old and grew up in Hobart. I love walking and attend a regular walking group. I do craft with my church and painting through the local integrated health centre. I enjoy volunteering and being part of my church community. I am usually a very happy person, but I do have my days. I am able to put things in the hands of God; I pass it on to him to take care of.

I was born with slight cerebral palsy. I didn't walk until I was four, and I did so then thanks to Dad teaching me. I was born with tunnel vision, which was so bad I would feel scared of things coming toward me. I have developed glaucoma over the years. Walking is more difficult for me than the average person, and I use a stick.

I care for my husband. We met when I was 17 or 18 and have been married 35 years.

"My husband had epilepsy as a child but this didn't stop him - he was an avid sportsman and represented Australia in the Special Olympics, winning gold medals."

My husband has had a lot of strokes over the past ten years and has significant health issues resulting from this. He also has a form of blood cancer.

Mostly caring involves being there for him. I go to his appointments, and keep track of his medication, and I am there for him when he is sick. He is a wonderful husband, and he cares for me too. I love the way we help each other. I love his surprise when I make



Above // Robyne and her husband, Wayne.

him a cup of tea, and I love his cheeky smile. We prepare meals together, do the garden together, wash up together, and go for walks and have coffee together when he can. He does the ironing for me when he is well enough!

We always thought that my husband would be my carer as we got older, but in fact, it went the other way. Caring has been a long road.

"The most rewarding thing is knowing that we have each other."

It is hard seeing him less active, knowing he is not going to get any better and imagining what might lie ahead. My church community is there for me if I need someone to talk to, or need support. My sister and husband's cousin are also there for us and will support us in the future.

Carers Tasmania also supports me and I volunteer with mail outs. I always make myself available to help them, and I enjoy being with other carers, and we talk and laugh as we work.

Robyne, Tasmania



Mental Health Reforms

Latest Updates

2015 saw the announcement of significant reforms for the mental health sector in Australia. These reforms will lead to changes in the way mental health services are funded and delivered and will have implications for carers of people experiencing mental illness.

What Are The Reforms?

Last year the National Mental Health Commission released their National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services, highlighting the existing complexity, inefficiency and fragmentation of the mental health system. On 26 November 2015, the Australian Government released their response to the review, setting out a significant, system-wide reform package aiming to address the issues raised by the

Commission, focusing on primary mental health care services.

The reform plan includes the following actions:

- contestable mental health services will be commissioned, but not delivered, through the Primary Health Networks (PHNs)
- coordinated packages of care for people with severe and complex needs and flexible support for mild and moderate needs
- establishment of a new Digital Mental Health Gateway
- renewal of a new approach to suicide prevention, coordinated by PHNs.

On 26 November 2015 the Australian Government released a system-wide reform package focused on primary mental health care services.

What Are The Benefits Of The Reforms?

The reforms move away from the current 'one size fits all' approach to mental health services. Instead, PHNs will be able to identify the right mix of services at the local level for people experiencing mental illness. This means decisions about the mental health services required by a local community will be made by the local community, not at the national level.

There will also be a 'stepped care' model, with people able to receive varying levels of treatment and support depending on their level of need. People with severe and complex mental health needs will be offered coordinated care packages to be used on appropriate services for their needs.

When Will The Reforms Start?

It will take considerable effort to successfully implement the reforms to mental health programmes and services. Therefore the arrangements will be phased in over three years from early 2016–17, with initial trial sites to be identified in this current financial year (2015–16).

Child And Youth Mental Health

Programs in the health and education portfolios of the Commonwealth will be joined up to create more effective interventions from early years to adolescence. There will be a single, integrated school-based mental health program, with stepped care arrangements for children through PHNs.

Youth mental health services including Headspace, will be better integrated with primary health services through the local PHN. There will also be better integration of mental health and drug and alcohol services for young people.

Suicide Prevention

A new national suicide prevention strategy will be implemented immediately with a regional approach to community based suicide prevention through PHNs. In addition, the Australian Government along with the states and territories will develop appropriate follow up arrangements for individuals after a self-harm or suicide attempt.

What Does This Mean For Carers Of People Experiencing Mental Illness?

The Australian Government's reform package means there will be changes ahead for the mental health sector.

These changes won't happen straight away, as government will seek the views and input from a range of stakeholders to help them design the implementation of the reforms. There is recognition of the importance of consumer and carer participation in the roll out of the new mental health framework, meaning carers will have opportunities to be involved.

A number of the proposals for reforms will directly or indirectly provide support and assistance for carers of people experiencing mental illness, such as the development of a single mental health gateway to improve access to services and information. In addition, there will be improved, coordinated support for people with severe mental illness and complex needs who are being managed with primary care, including young people with complex needs.



How Do I Get Involved?

Further information regarding the reforms will be released throughout the year. There will be opportunities to participate by providing feedback and input as the details of the reforms are developed and agreed. The Carers Associations (including Carers Victoria, Carers South Australia, Carers Tasmania and Carers ACT) have a range of self-advocacy material available on their websites to assist carers with making submissions to government. The Carers Associations will continue to make submissions to represent the views and needs of carers; however, your input, opinions and expertise will be needed so the mental health system reforms are developed with acknowledgement and support of carers and the care relationship.

For more info please visit the National Mental Health Commission website:
www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au

Finalists of the 2015 National Carer Awards

The state and territory finalists of the 2015 National Carer Awards were selected from an impressive and diverse array of nominations.

The big response to the national awards program demonstrates the large numbers of unpaid carers – as well as foster and kinship carers – across the country who are eligible for these awards.

“Carers are an integral part of Australia’s health system and are the foundation of our aged, disability, palliative and community care systems,” said Carers Australia CEO Ara Cresswell.

“Anyone, any time, can become a carer. The chances are you personally are a carer, need a carer or know a carer. Carers are an integral part of Australia’s health system and are the foundation of our aged, disability, palliative and community care systems,” Ms Cresswell said.

Chief Executive of Life Without Barriers Claire Robbs said all the finalists are to be congratulated. “We want to give the community a better understanding of unpaid carers across the country as they have such an important role in the lives of people they support.”

State and territory winners will be in the running to receive a national carer award across the three categories (one winner per category): Family Carer; Foster and Kinship Carer and Young Carer aged 25 years and under. Carers eligible for these awards are unpaid but may be receiving a carer-related government payment or a reimbursement.

The National Carer Awards, funded by the Department of Social Services is a partnership between Carers Australia and Life Without Barriers.



Australian Capital Territory Finalists

The winners were announced by The Hon. Mick Gentleman MP, Minister for Children and Young People, Minister for Ageing.

Marilyn Nowland, Family Carer.

Elizabeth Stanuga, Foster and Kinship Carer.



Above // ACT: Family Carer winner, Marilyn Nowlan with Minister. Hon. Mick Gentleman MP, Minister for Children and Young People, Minister for Ageing, ACT Foster & Kinship Carer winner, Elizabeth Stanuga with dignitaries.

Victorian Finalists

The winners were announced at a ceremony at Parliament House Melbourne and were presented by The Hon. Gabrielle Williams MP Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers.

Mulu Mihreteab, Family Carer.

Shayna Henry-Camilleri, Foster and Kinship Carer.

Auraria Steele, Young Carer.



Above // Mulu, VIC Family Carer winner, Auraria, VIC Young Carer winner, Shayna, VIC Foster and Kinship Carer with Minister Hon. Gabrielle Williams MP Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers, Caroline Mulcahy, Carers Victoria, CEO with dignitaries.

Tasmanian Finalists

The winners were announced at a ceremony at Parliament House, Hobart, and were presented by The Hon. Will Hodgman, Premier.

Terese Millhouse, Family Carer.

Eleanor and John Kramer, Foster and Kinship Carer.

Anita Glover, Young Carer.



Above // Carers Tasmania CEO Janine Arnold, TAS Family Carer winner, Terese Millhouse, TAS Young Carer winner, Anita Glover, TAS Foster & Kinship Carer winner, Eleanor Moore, with Terry Lawler, Life Without Barriers (LWB) Board Chair and dignitaries.

South Australian Finalists

The winners were announced at a ceremony at Parliament House Adelaide, hosted by The Hon. Zoe Bettison MP, Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers.

Maureen Brown, Pat and Keith Sutton, dual winners Family Carer.

Leah Potter and Kevin Rewell, Foster and Kinship Carer.

Laryssa King, Young Carer.



Above // Carers South Australia, CEO Rosemary Warmington AM, Laryssa King, SA Young Carer winner, SA Joint Family Carer winners, Maureen Brown and Pat and Keith Sutton, SA Foster & Kinship Carer winners, Leah Potter & Kevin Rewell and dignitaries.

Matt's story



Above // Matt with his brother Mikey.

“Talking about myself as a young LGBTIQ carer was something I struggled with. Get me to speak about being a young carer, I could speak for hours, or similarly, as a young LGBTIQ person – but putting the two together is something I haven’t really considered before.”

This is one of the main reasons why I was so interested in Carers Victoria’s Young LGBTIQ Carers project. I thought it was a very niche and selective group in the community. In fact, I asked myself – does this group even exist?

“My caring story began before I can even remember. I have one photo of me where I’m barely able to walk, still in a nappy and feeding my older brother, Mikey, a bottle. Ever since, caring for him has been as much a part of my life as breathing, or as much as coffee is now – it’s a part of me.”

However, at the end of 2014, my caring role became a much greater part of my life.

It was just Mum, Mikey and myself at home. When Year 12 students complete their final exam, they usually go home to burn their books, or they go out to celebrate the end of a very intense and stressful past few years. I walked out of my final exam to meet up with Mum and drove down to Centrelink. I told them that although I had originally said I would no longer be a ‘student’, they shouldn’t bother with transferring me to the ‘job-seeker’ status, as I was now a full-time carer.

Realistically, it was the only solution. With Mikey requiring care before and after his day service, someone had to be flexible with their schedule, and while I had plans to go to university, that someone was me.

The thing about my family’s situation, which I’m sure isn’t the only one out there, is that we live in constant survival mode.

Will we get more funding for paid carers? Can we afford more respite? When I can’t defer university any longer, what will we do?

Mum, Mikey and myself had moved to Melbourne from Canberra in January 2013 in order to provide my brother with a better life as day services were available here. It meant that during the day, he would be able to do activities and be looked after, while I was given the opportunity to continue with school and for Mum to work.

I was introduced to programs for young carers who were still in school. This was fantastic; they offered financial and social support and organised programs and events, though I never mentioned anything about being same-sex attracted.



Above // Matt as a toddler feeding his older brother, Mikey a bottle.

After I left school and took on an even more demanding caring role, I felt that I had no-one else to help me, besides Mum, of course. No 'young adult carer' programs...nothing. All I had was the long, unknown processes of applying for a little bit of funding for formal carers to help out every now and then.

This definitely made it more difficult because I truly felt that no-one understood. I felt that we were all alone and no-one was looking out for Mikey and me.

I'm not sure about others' stories of how they came to terms with the sexuality or gender identity, but for me, it was when I travelled overseas. Now we can't expect all young people to go overseas to figure out who they are, but what I realised made the difference for me, was the fact that I was away from Mum, my home, my everyday life – and all I had time for was taking in the incredible sights, and the countless hours of self-reflection.

See, when you're a carer, you don't have a lot of time for self-reflection. Maybe those few moments before you fall asleep, or maybe when you're in the car

– but even then, I often found myself planning for the next day or thinking about what I needed to do for Mikey.

Being a full-time carer for Mikey was one of the most challenging things I've ever experienced, but I wouldn't take back that time for anything. I learnt so much about myself, about the system and my love, passion and respect for carers grew so much.

"It's projects such as the 'Young LGBTIQ Carers program for workers' that let me and other young people know that it's actually all okay to self-reflect. It's okay to be yourself and be a carer, and that you're definitely not alone."

Mike is now living in supported accommodation near to Matt and his mother. Matt is continuing his studies at university and working part-time and regularly spends time with his brother.



Young LGBTIQ Carers Online Education For Workers Resource

The Young LGBTIQ Carers program for workers is an eLearning course that builds workers' skills and knowledge to better identify and respond to the needs of young LGBTIQ people with caring responsibilities.

Developed with young people and workers, it provides tips on how to make services more inclusive and remove barriers for young LGBTIQ carers.

For more information visit www.carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/education/elearning call 1800 242 636 or email: education@carersvictoria.org.au





About the Directors/Writers

Director: Neil Armfield

Producer: Kylie Du Fresne

Original 1995 memoir:
Timothy Conigrave

Stage Adaption: Tommy Murphy

Film Script and Associate Producer:
Tommy Murphy

Actors: Ryan Carr, Craig Stott, Anthony LaPaglia, Guy Pearce, Sarah Snook

Currently on general release. *Holding The Man* is available on iTunes for AUD\$19.99, dvd rrp \$24.98 and blue ray rrp \$29.98.

Nominations for: AACTA Award for Best Film (Kylie Du Fresne), AACTA Award for Best Direction (Neil Armfield), AACTA Award for the Best Lead Actor (Ryan Carr), AACTA Award for Best Editing (Dany Cooper), AACTA Award for Best Adapted Screenplay (Tommy Murphy), AACTA Award for Best Support Actor (Anthony LaPaglia).

Holding The Man

When *Holding the Man* was screening at my local cinema the title was familiar, but I went along without giving it much thought.

I was surprised by how powerful it was for me. I was moved to tears, inspired, and also felt quite angry.

Holding the Man was adapted by Neil Armfield into a feature film from the best selling memoir written in the mid-nineties by Timothy Conigrave. It is a story of Conigrave's enduring fifteen-year relationship with his partner John Caleo, lasting right up until Caleo's death in 1992.

"Exquisitely told, director Neil Armfield has captured the beauty of this 15 year old love story."
- Urban Chronicle

Conigrave, an aspiring actor, falls in love with Caleo, who is the captain of the football team at their all-boys Catholic School in Melbourne. It is first love for Caleo, and their attraction is intense, delightfully sweet, and inevitable. Their ways of catching moments of time together were exhilarating and hilarious! Their relationship was met with disapproval in places you might hope for acceptance, and quiet and subtle support from surprising and sometimes unexpected places.

The relationship weathers the changes that occur with the coming of age and the need to part ways to explore identity and possibilities. The movie deepens when both men are tested for HIV and find they are positive.

The strength of their love only grows with the need to support each other and they unite against the discrimination they face. They continue to bring love and delight to each other as Conigrave's health deteriorates.

"Armfield and Murphy show intimacy, honesty and authenticity. The affection they depict is never less than moving."
- Screen Daily

The anger I felt occurred when I saw the lack of recognition of their relationship by some, and how this unfolded in such hurtful ways at crucial moments. This true story, with its message of the need for acceptance and equality, is still relevant today.

Simone Favelle, Carers Tasmania



Did you know help is just a phone call away?

Call the National
Carer Advisory Line
on **1800 242 636**

*"They listened to me, they
were willing to talk to me,
answered my questions,
gave me information and
offered advice."*

Our professional carer advisors will listen to you and provide information and support to help you in your caring role. This service specialises in supporting carers. We can locate appropriate services for your unique circumstances, clarify any eligibility criteria, vacancies and/or associated costs.

*"It's good to know there are
services available to help
carers - but finding out about
them is not always easy."*

We can connect carers to a range of services including:

- support and community care services
- counselling
- funding opportunities
- carer education and training
- respite services
- local carer support groups

The National Carer Advisory Line is a freecall 1800 242 636*.

The National Carer Advisory Line is an initiative delivered by Carers Australia and the other State and Territory-based Carer Associations working collaboratively. It is supported by the Australian Government, Department of Social Services. Carers Australia and the other State and Territory-based Carer Associations acknowledges the support of the Australian Government, Department of Social Services.

*freecall from local phones, mobile calls at mobile rates.

Winners of DVD Package Prize

Thank you to Icon Film Distribution-Home Entertainment for the DVD prize packages and to everyone who submitted entries.

**Congratulations
to the winners
of the DVD
Package Prize**
which go out to:



Graham W of South Australia, for his 'Carers Retreat' story.

Jenni K of Ravenswood, Tasmania for her 'Carer Story'.

Lois S of Brighton, Tasmania for her 'Carer Story'.

The following extract is from Graham's story - 'Carers Retreat':

Some years back I went on a carers' retreat and had a fantastic time courtesy of Northern Country Carers. I went along with a minibus full of ladies that's right fellas, I was the only bloke on that trip - as we headed down to Wallaroo on Yorke Peninsula, South Australia.

We stayed at Ranaldo's Holiday Home up at North Beach, Wallaroo, and it was excellent - everything you could wish for. When we arrived, I stowed my gear and started to pitch in with tea preparations, because that's what I was used to; but the ladies said, "No, no, that's our job, you just relax and enjoy." It was hard at first for me to do nothing but what a blessing those ladies were.

I didn't have to cook a meal or wash a dish the whole time. For just a little while I didn't have a care in the world.

Aromatherapy Tips



Aromatherapy triggers the relaxation response and promotes calmness. This has health benefits of decreased heart rate, healthy cortisol levels, improved digestion and improved blood sugar levels by boosting the immune, respiratory and circulatory system.

The scents trigger an area in the brain called the limbic system. When stimulated this system releases endorphins, neurotransmitters and other feel-good chemicals. The scents can be released by direct inhalation or by diffusion – in baths, compresses, through massage, facial steam, diffusion, and topical application such as antiseptics and anti-inflammatories.

Essential oils are absorbed by the skin and into the blood stream.

Tips for buying and storage

Buy only a small amount of the best available organic, undiluted oils. A few drops of essential oil goes a long way and they lose their potency quickly. Store in a cool, dark place away from sunlight, as heat can destroy their delicate chemical properties. Buy pure essential oils only and mix them yourself.

What oils to buy?

Buy a good quality carrier oil – this is an oil which will provide you with a base to massage the oils into your body. These can be almond, avocado, jojoba, or extra virgin olive oil.

Lavender – Helps with headaches and sleep.

Camomile – Helps relieve tension, promotes relaxation and sleep.

Bergamot – Helps with depression, aids digestion and reduces muscle tension.

Jasmine – Helps lift your mood, relieves stress and depression.

Frankincense – Helps combat stress and respiratory problems.

Sandalwood – Helps to calm, balance emotions, relieves tension and calms the digestive system.

Different ways to use

Inhalation

This is achieved by using a diffuser. A diffuser is anything that helps the essential oil to be evaporated and dispersed into the air.

Mist Diffusion

Create a mist spray. You can use a special atomiser, only use this for 7–10 minutes. These are effective in large rooms as they disperse the aroma well.

Passive Diffusion

A cotton ball with essential oil in a small bowl works well.

Heat Diffusion

The heat of a candle or electricity is used to warm the oil and disperse it into the air. Please note: Not recommended to use a heat source diffuser around pets, children or the elderly.

Massage

Essential oils should always be blended with a carrier oil before they are used in massage. These carrier oils dilute the essential oils and aid absorption through the skin. Mix a few drops of essential oil with a teaspoon of the carrier oil.

Before massaging, make sure you are warm and your skin is dry. For self-massage, work on your forehead and face, shoulders, hands, feet and the small of your back.

Aromatherapy is portable and just a few minutes a day can help improve your wellbeing.

Education Services

Toula couldn't understand why her mother kept going on about the goats. Toula was tired. Her mum and dad rang every day, several times a day, with questions and demands. They were finding the recent move into a retirement village very difficult and couldn't understand why they were not able to move in with Toula and her two boys.

Toula's mum had recently been diagnosed with dementia and this compounded the challenges Toula faced as a single mum and carer. And the goats!! She yelled at her mother, "There aren't any goats; I don't know why you keep going on about the goats!"

Toula's Carer Support Worker suggested she participate in Carers Victoria's education program Dementia: Carers, Families and the System.

The program offers a practical, interactive approach with clear take home strategies.

Toula registered, although she wasn't sure she would be able to attend all four sessions.

She found the first session helpful, relevant and importantly inclusive of her cultural background. She found it so helpful she made the time to return.



It was during the second session the group began to explore the triggers for challenging behaviours and Toula told her story of her mum and the goats.

Toula realised that her mother was reverting back to an old memory and maybe the goats were part of that. It was with this light bulb moment that Toula realised she didn't know much about her mum's life before she came to Australia, and soon she may not get the chance to learn. So next time her mum asked if the goats had enough grass, Toula said "Hey mum, tell me about the goats..."

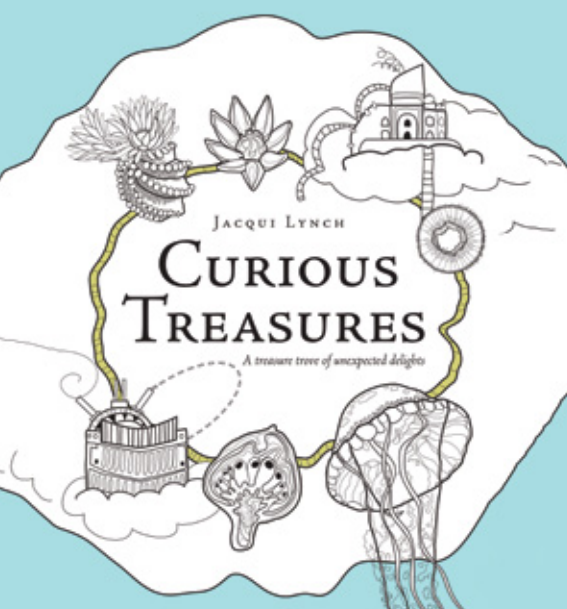
Carers Victoria offers carer workshops and educational programs to help you enhance your knowledge about how to

best support your health and wellbeing and the person you are caring for.

What we offer:

- Information sessions: A one-hour session providing a brief overview of a topic
- Workshops: A two-hour session. We are happy to advise which workshops will best meet your needs.
- Programs: A series of two or more sessions designed to build on and complement each other and provide in-depth information on a topic.

For more Information email:
education@carersvictoria.org.au
or call 1800 242 636



Curious Treasure Colouring Book

'Curious Treasure' is a colouring book specifically created for carers by Jacqui Lynch. A treasure trove of unexpected delights' it is filled with 30 nature-based images to help carers relax and enter into a meditative mood while enjoying the growing popularity of colouring in.

Jacqui has generously donated 4 colouring books to give away to our readers.

To win a copy please send in your coloured in seed pod to:

**Editor, Carers News Magazine,
Carers Victoria, PO Box 2204,
Footscray VIC 3011 or email:
publications@carersvictoria.org.au**

Deadline: 22 April 2016

More information:

www.curious treasures.com.au

or call 03 5446 9792 to purchase a downloadable copy of 'Curious Treasures' RRP \$20:00, plus \$3.60 for postage.

*Terms and Conditions

1. One entry per person
2. Entry is limited to Carer Association Members (Carers Tasmania and Carers Victoria)
3. If you wish to subscribe to the Carers News Magazine please call 1800 242 636 or email: publications@carersvictoria.org.au
4. Winners will be judged on skill of entry and will be selected by Carers Victoria, General Manager, Policy, Strategy and Public Affairs. Judge's decision is final.

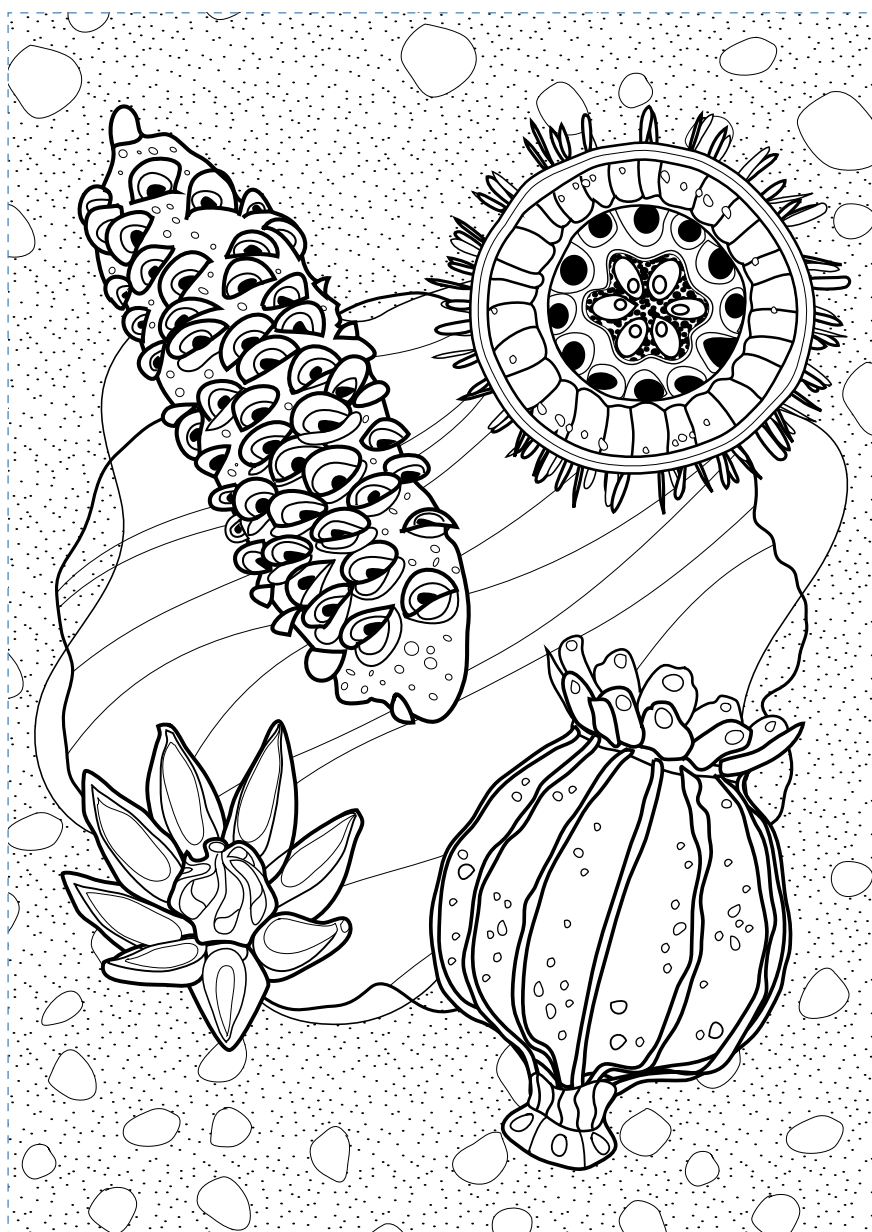
Any competition complaint is to be directed to the Editor, Carers News Magazine via email: publication@carersvictoria.org.au and will be formally addressed through Carers Victoria's formal complaint procedure process.

Take a Break

9			2	3	7	6	8	
	2		8	4			7	3
8		7	1		5		2	9
		4	5	9	8	3		
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5	1						4	7
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	5		9	1		7	3	8
3		8		5				

Sudoku

3	9	8	7	5	2	1	6	4
6	5	2	9	1	4	7	3	8
4	7	1	3	8	6	2	9	5
5	1	9	6	2	3	8	4	7
2	8	3	4	7	1	9	5	6
7	6	4	5	9	8	3	1	2
8	3	7	1	6	5	4	2	9
1	2	6	8	4	9	5	7	3
9	4	5	2	3	7	6	8	1



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Celebrating 10 years of Young Carer Scholarships

This year the Young Carer Scholarship Program celebrates 10 years of helping young Victorian carers aged between 12 and 25 years. The average age of the 105,000 plus young carers living in Victoria is between 12 and 13 years; representing around six percent of Australia's youth population.

Many young carers come from single parent, low-income families. Most care for another family member. The responsibility of caring for someone living with physical or mental health issues affects every aspect of these young lives.

Research shows that the caring role impacts their ability to participate in education, friendships and recreational opportunities. Many young carers will not talk about their situation with others "for fear of being judged or bullied". Consequently, they feel isolated, lack the necessary support networks and are likely drop out of school. Compared to their peers, young carers have lower educational outcomes and fewer opportunities in life.

Developed out of a desire to support and recognise young carers, the Young Carer Scholarship Program assists secondary school students by contributing to their education costs or out of school activities such as school camps, sport, music, art and cultural pursuits. Since 2006, 1175 young carers have been recipients of the Young Carer Scholarship Program.

The longevity and success of the Program is made possible by the generous support of philanthropic and individual donors. Without their support, these young people would miss out on the opportunities provided to them through the Program.

With your support we can take the Young Carer Scholarship Program into the next decade and help make a difference to the lives of young carers living in Victoria.



"Our sincerest gratitude for your magnificent assistance; it has provided Amanda with equipment we would never have been able to access.

Not only did you recognise Amanda's patience, love and care of her father and brother and myself, I cried my eyes out with relief that she was being awarded a scholarship to support her art."

- Amanda's Mother

With her 2014 Young Carer Scholarship Amanda was able to buy some specialist photography equipment. She is studying photography and aspires one day to be a professional photographer.

You can donate to the Young Carer Scholarship Program by phone on **1800 242 636** or visit **www.carersvictoria.org.au**

Thank you.

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www.carersvictoria.org.au/Voice

Murray to Moyne Fundraising



Team Vision Super set to ride the 30th Murray to Moyne to raise funds for Carers Victoria.



Above // Team Vision Super in action from the 2015 Murray to Moyne cycling relay.

In 2015, the Vision Super team rode in the Murray to Moyne cycling relay. The team raised \$30,000 and completed 300kms. They generously donated the proceeds to Carers Victoria and the Royal District Nursing Services.

This year Vision Super team will join 1500 riders to participate in the 2016 Murray to Moyne relay (2 – 3 April). Vision Super has once again pledged to donate money raised from the ride to Carers Victoria and this year, to the Snowdome Foundation.

Together we can help the Vision Super team reach and even exceed the money raised last year.

If you would like to support the Vision Super team raise funds for carers living in Victoria:

- Go to **www.murraytomoyne.com.au** and click on **Donate**
- Enter your details on the online form
- From the **Team** drop down menu, select **360: VISION SUPER** (Carers Victoria)
- Complete the form by making a donation.